

## Message Text

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AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG  
AMCONSUL DURBAN

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 CAPE TOWN 0089

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E.O.11652:N/A  
SUB: BRANDT AYERS SPEECH BEFORE S.A. INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS  
AND INTERVIEW WITH THE MEDIA

SUMMARY: BRANDT AYERS GAVE A FIFTY-FIVE MINUTE SPEECH BEFORE  
THE S.A. INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS, OUTLINING THE CIVIL RIGHTS  
STRUGGLE IN THE SOUTH. HE THEN COMMENTED ON THE NEW SOUTH AND  
CURRENT RACE RELATIONS. AYERS WAS INTERVIEWED BY SEVERAL CAPE TOWN  
NEWSPAPERS. HE COMMENTED ON U.S./S.A. RELATIONS  
AND HOW THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AND AMERICAN  
PEOPLE VIEWED THE SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA.

1. FRIDAY, JANUARY 20, 1978. BRANDT AYERS, PUBLISHER/EDITOR OF  
THE ANNISTON (ALA) STAR AND SYNDICATED COLUMNIST WAS INVITED  
TO ADDRESS THE FORTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE SOUTH  
AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS, BEING HOSTED BY THE UNIVERSITY  
OF CAPE TOWN. THE THEME OF THE AYERS TALK WAS A BRIEF OUTLINE  
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OF RACE RELATIONS IN THE SOUTH FROM THE EARLY 1950'S.

AYERS SAID: "THE MOVE AWAY FROM RACE DISCRIMINATION IN THE  
SOUTHERN STATES OF AMERICA DID NOT COME FROM A SPONTANEOUS  
CITIZEN DEMAND FOR JUSTICE AND INTEGRATION. THERE WAS A STRUGGLE  
FOR THE CONSCIENCE OF MY REGION LED BY BLACK PEOPLE: THEY  
DEMONSTRATED THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RIGHT AND WRONG. THESE

DEMONSTRATIONS WERE PRINTED ON THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE NATION BY THE ELECTRONIC TUBE."

AYERS WENT ON TO STATE THAT " THE 1965 VOTING RIGHTS ACT MARKED THE BEGINNING OF REAL CHANGE- CHANGE THAT COULD BE FELT IN EVERY COUNTY COURTHOUSE IN THE AMERICAN SOUTH.

IN A QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION AFTER THE TALK, AYERS WAS ASKED IF AN ANALOGY COULD BE DRAWN TO EXTERNAL FORCES COMING IN THE AMERICAN SOUTH FROM THE AMERICAN NORTH TO EFFECT CHANGE AND THE HYPOTHESIS THAT EXTERNAL FORCES SHOULD COME INTO S.A. TO HELP EFFECT CHANGE. HIS REPLY WAS THAT THE IMPETUS FOR CHANGE IN THE AMERICAN SOUTH WAS INITIATED AND CARRIED ON FROM WITHIN,BY BLACK SOUTHERN AMERICANS AND THAT THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN THE ONLY EFFECTIVE WAY TO PROMUGATE CHANGE.

AYERS LATER IN THE DAY GAVE AN INTERVIEW WHICH APPEARED IN THE CAPE TIMES OF JAN.23,1978.

" AN ALABAMA NEWSPAPER PUBLISHER, MR. BRANDT AYERS, SAID IN CAPE TOWN YESTERDAY THAT THE UNITED STATES ACTION IN SPEAKING OUT AGAINST A POSSIBLE COMMUNIST PRESENCE IN THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT OUGHT TO BE A CLEAR SIGNAL TO SOUTH AFRICANS THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD RESIST MARXIST INTERVENTION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

MR. AYERS SAID IN THE INTERVIEW THAT THE AMERICANS HAD  
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A "VERY STRONG" DESIRE TO CONTINUE TO WORK WITH PEOPLE WHO SHARED THEIR VIEWS.

HOWEVER, THIS DID NOT MEAN THAT THE ANTI-COMMUNIST STANCE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT WOULD IN ANY WAY BE REGARDED AS TRADE-OFF FOR APARTHEID. IN FACT, MR. AYERS SAID, THERE WERE FORCES THAT WERE DRIVING THE REPUBLIC AND THE UNITED STATES APART....

"CREATING A SEPARATION BETWEEN US ALMOST AS LARGE AS THE APARTNESS (APARTHEID) WHICH STANDS BETWEEN SOUTH AFRICA'S TRIBES AND THE WHITE TRIBE."

AYERS REFERED TO A RECENT ARTICLE HE HAD WRITTEN IN WHICH HE SAID THE AMERICAN OFFICIALS WERE UNANIMOUS IN THEIR EXPECTATION THAT THE TWO COUNTRIES WOULD MOVE FURTHER APART AS CIVIL DIVISIONS BETWEEN THE EIGHTEEN MILLION BLACKS AND FOUR MILLION WHITES INCREASED.

"THERE IS NO TIMETABLE. EVENTS WILL DICTATE THE METHOD AND DEGREE OF DISENGAGEMENT FROM OUR OLD FRIENDS, BUT THERE IS AN AIR OF INEVITABILITY IN WASHINGTON...THE SUCCESS OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES CREATED NEW CENTRES OF POWER

AND NEW ASSUMPTIONS ABOUTH OURSELVES AND THE REST OF THE WORLD."

"EVENTS, CONDITIONS AND PERCEPTIONS HAVE CHANGED AND NOW THE GOVERNMENT IN PRETORIA LOOKS AT ITS OLD FRIEND IN WASHINGTON WITH SOME HURT AND RESENTMENT AND SEES A STRANGER."

AYERS MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS IN THE INVIEW:

1. IT WOULD BE INCORRECT TO THINK THAT ONE COULD APPEAL DIRECTLY TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE OVER THE HEAD OF THE ADMINISTRATION.

THE GAP THAT EXISTED WAS LARGELY ONE OF INFORMATION, AND BY AND LARGE THE ADMINISTRATION PROBABLY REFLECTED THE VIEWS OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC ON AFRICA.

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SIXTY-THREE PERCENT OF AMERICANS THINK JAILINGS WITHOUT TRIAL OF MODERATE BLACK LEADERS ARE NOT JUSTIFIED, AND MORE DONALD WOODS'S TYPE ACTIONS WOULD INCREASE THIS PERCENTAGE.

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2. POLITICAL CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICA WOULD HAVE TO BE BIG ENOUGH TO AFFECT THE VARIOUS POWER CENTERS IN AMERICA BEFORE THE UNITED STATES WOULD ACCEPT IT.

THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT WAS NOT IMPOSING ANY BLUEPRINT ON SOUTH AFRICA. THERE WAS MERELY A STRONG DESIRE THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONSULT WITH ALL ITS CITIZENS IN ORDER TO BUILD A JUST SOCIETY.

IF, THROUGH SUCH CONSULTATIONS, CONSENSUS WAS REACHED ON A SYSTEM FOR GOVERNING THE COUNTRY, THEN THE UNITED STATES WOULD ACCEPT IT.

THE UNITED STATES WAS NOT INSISTING ON ONE-MAN, ONE-VOTE, BUT MERELY THAT WHATEVER SYSTEM WAS ADOPTED SHOULD BE THROUGH CONSULTATION AND CONSENSUS.

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SCRAPPING RACIAL BARRIERS WOULD BE VIEWED AS AN IMPORTANT STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

3. AMERICA'S GOOD OFFICES WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY BE AVAILABLE TO PROMOTE DIALOGUE IN SOUTH AFRICA BETWEEN THE RACES IF THIS WAS REQUESTED BY SOUTH AFRICANS.

4. HUMAN RIGHTS WAS A DIFFICULT POLICY TO APPLY WITH 'EQUAL CLARITY' BUT THERE WAS A GENIUNE COMMITMENT TO THIS POLICY BY THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION.

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